Improving the image of judiciary

430. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA:
SHRI SWARAJ KAUSHAL:

Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that very little has been done in the last few years to improve the image of the judiciary and it remained under pressure with mounting backlog of cases due to the snail-paced system; and

(b) if so, Government's views on this situation and the action being taken to resolve the impasse?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): (a) and (b) No, Sir.

Both Government and judiciary are concerned with mounting backlog of cases.

Various steps to improve the image of the Judiciary have been taken by the Government by implementing a series of measures for the speedy disposal of cases. These include increase in the number of posts of Judges /Judicial Officers, establishment of Special Courts/Tribunals, appointment of Special Judicial/Metropolitan Magistrates, computerisation of courts and adoption of alternative modes of dispute resolution, such as, arbitration and conciliation. Lok Adalats have been given a statutory base as supplementary forum for resolution of disputes.

Government have sanctioned an amount of Rs. 502.90 crore for creation of 1734 Fast Track Courts for expeditious disposal of long pending cases and cases involving undertrials on priority. These courts will start functioning with effect from April, 2001.

A pilot project for the computerisation and networking of all courts in the four metropolitan cities of Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata and Chennai is being taken up in the year 2001-02 to serve as a model for other courts in the country. Computerisation and networking of courts will augment the capacities of courts in the country and speed up disposal of cases.

Besides, the Supreme Court has taken a number of initiatives for expeditious disposal of cases such as more practical categorisation and grouping of cases, to take up for hearing all the cases listed for the particular day as far as

possible, non-accumulation of defective matters, reservation of more and sufficient time slot for old pending cases in chronological order and streamlining of administration and man-power of the registry through computer network. The High Courts have also taken similar steps to reduce backlog of cases.

National Task Force on Judicial Reforms

431. SHRI V.V. RAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a National Task Force on Judicial Reforms of the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) led by C.K. Birla had looked into the problem of pending cases in various courts and submitted a report to Government;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the main recommendations made; and

(c) Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): (a) On the eve of a National Seminar held by Confederation of Indian Industry in 1996, a report of the Task Force led by Shri C.K. Birla on Judicial Reforms was presented to the then Minister of State for Law, Justice and Company Affairs, as the Chief Guest in the Seminar.

(b) The salient features of the report include, *inter-alia,* timely filling up of vacancies of judges, increase in the number of judges, increase in the retirement age of the High Court Judges, streamlining the procedure, rationalization of court holidays/vacations, rationalising of court fees to make it more realistic, curtailment of adjournments, accountability of executive officers in revenue matters, accountability of judges, improvement in service conditions of judges, training and orientation of lawyers, etc.

(c) The recommendations cover a wide convas of judicial reforms. Implementation of Judicial reforms is an ongoing and continuous process. The Law Commission and various Committees constituted in this regard have suggested a number of measures on judicial reforms. Various measures have been taken by the Government for the speedy disposal of cases. These include filling up of Vacancies of Judges, increase in the number of posts of Judges/ Judicial Officers, establishment of Special Courts/tribunals, appointment of Special Judicial/Metropolitan Magistrates, etc.

The Code of Civil Procedure (Amendment) Act, 1999, has been passed by Parliament which, *inter alia,* includes restriction on adjournments upto